

## World Happiness Day (02)

### Transcending the momentary nature of worldly pleasures

The ups and downs in life generates corresponding moments of happiness and miseries. Life was never, is not and will never be only happiness or only woes. The Yog philosophy further states that living beings cannot circumvent miseries in worldly life.

The eight limbs of Yog (*Ashtānga Yog*) serve as compass to progress to self-realization, God-realization and ultimately attain the state of eternal, immaculate bliss in salvation (*Mukti*). The starting block is *Yama-Niyama*, the do's and don'ts which empowers the seeker to lead a righteous life (*Dharma*), strive for righteous earnings (*Artha*) and engage in righteous enjoyment (*Kāma*).

The Yog philosophy of Sage Patanjali describes four types of distress arising out of worldly pleasures: *Parinām dukha* or consequences, such as diseases and organ failure resulting from the immoderate consumption of food and drinks; the onset of old age.

1. *Tāpa dukha* or hardships, viz. the struggles to attain an objective; food turning stale for reasons beyond control.
2. *Samskāra dukha* or impressions/imprints, namely - longings to re-experience pleasure previously relished; cravings due to addiction.
3. *Gunavritti-virodha dukha* or the ever-changing nature of things due to the conflicting operation of the three *gunas* (modes of particles): (a) *Sattva* stimulates goodness, positivity, harmony, pleasure, enthusiasm, knowledge and wisdom; (b) *Rajas* generates activity, change, movement and confusion, and (c) *Tamas* represents darkness, inertia, destruction, chaos.
4. The odds of the three *gunas* can be seen in a ripe fruit, first day bright color shades (*sattva* dominant), changing colors after 3-4 days as it softens and starts shrinking (*rajas* dominant), and after some more days fungus covers it as it rots (*tamas* dominant)

Misery results from ignorance, incorrect knowledge (*Avidyā*), confusion between the self, the mind and the body (*Āsmitā*), attachment (*Rāga*), aversion, hatred (*Dvesha*) and clinging to physical life, fear of death (*Abhinivesha*).

One can avoid or overcome that which needs to be avoided/overcome only if he/she knows the causes; one can halt or abandon that which needs to be halted or abandoned only if he/she has the means to do so (*Heya heya-hetu, Hāna tathā hāna upāya*).

The tools to recognize the types and causes of misery, to be ever-mindful and stay away from afflictions are (i) true knowledge (*Vidyā*), and (ii) discriminating knowledge / unwavering discerning vision (*Viveka*).

Moreover, the fruition of virtuous karma leads to pleasurable life and bad karma to miserable life (specie - *Jāti*, lifespan - *Āyu*, experiences - *Bhoga*).

The Yog philosophy advocates moderation as the one-and-only option to solve most of the problems of the modern world.

May 09, 2016: Ban Ki Moon, the then UN Secretary General addressed the SIDS Conference in Mauritius, in unequivocal terms: “We will need high-level, high-energy political commitment, renewed global partnership for development ...to go beyond traditional statistics and embrace a data revolution ...to prioritize social goals and the integrity of the planet and transform our economy ... to look beyond national borders and short-term interests and act in solidarity ...institutions must adapt and become fit for an even bigger purpose ...*But this agenda will not be realized in New York or Geneva ...It will happen in communities and it will take everyone ...Sustainability is development that respects people and the planet and requires us to make the linkages between climate change, energy, food security, water scarcity, global health and decent work ...we must move from aspirations to action – from intentions to implementation.*”

The UN Chief went one step further in his meeting with the private sector people: « It seems people believe they have two planets. The mind-set has to change. » In his own way, he espoused the universal concepts of Yog philosophy, especially *aparigraha* which cautions all to stay away from greediness (5<sup>th</sup> component of Yama) as *our universe has sufficient resources to fulfil the needs of all NOT the greed of a few!*

That explains why the powerful and/or wealthiest nations are not the happiest ones. Likewise, the most powerful or wealthiest of humans is not the happiest as he/she undergoes pains and sufferings in the rat race ...

1. To acquire power and/or wealth (*Arjan dosha*);
2. To retain that power and/or protect the acquired wealth (*Rakshan dosha*);
3. To create a new identity with that power/and or wealth (*Sangh dosha*);
4. To expand one's power and/or wealth so that it does not diminish (*Kshaya dosha*); and
5. In the process, misery is inflicted or caused to be inflicted on others (*Himsa dosha*).

Happiness is derived through the judicious exercise of power and/or efficient use of wealth to uplift the physical, mental-moral-spiritual and social welfare of all. The password to access long-lasting happiness are Yama-Niyama.

1. Yama are the don'ts or restraints to do harmful things, through (1.a) non-violence (*Ahimsa*), (1.b) truth (*Satya*), (1.c) non-stealing (*Asteya*), (1.d) celibacy (*Brahmacharya*), (1.e) non-grasping/non accumulation (*Aparigraha*).
2. Niyama are the do's to achieve beneficial things by means of (2.a) physical, mental and emotional cleanliness (*Saucha*), (2.b) contentment, being satisfied of the outcome of our efforts (*Santosha*), (2.c) austerity, resilience/endurance (*Tapa*), (2.d) self-study, introspection (*Svādhyāya*) and (2.e) surrender to the Creator and the laws of the Creation (*Eeshvar Pranidhāna*).

The happiest and most well connected societies stand out of the crowd due to their resilience and ability to deal with bad things. They have a high Social Capital Index; people are connected on the Web-We-Want ...where people ...rally ...help each other ...immediately step out to, to re-knit the social fabric after social unrest, disruptions, and reconstruct infrastructure after natural disasters.

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